

Mr Nick Broad

Environmental Health
Westminster City Council
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP
Telephone 0207 641 3921
Email foi@westminster.gov.uk

Our ref: 33154270

Your ref:

Date: 3 January 2024

Dear Mr Broad

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

Thank you for your recent Freedom of Information request. You asked to be provided with the following information:

In previous years, in response to FOI requests the council has provided full redacted complaints data, including descriptions, as evidenced on this page:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/busking>

This year, in response to an FOI request about complaints in Covent Garden, the council only provided complaints data without the description.

So, please provide all complaints about busking between April 2021 and May 2023, including descriptions, as you have done previously.

Additionally, the 'Busking and street entertainment licensing policy review report' says this:

'Just over 50% of complaints (2576) were related to noise, with around 10% relating to unlicensed entertainers or street trading.'

So, please show, for each complaint, how it was classified to arrive at those figures. For example, whether the council marked a complaint as a 'noise' complaint, or about 'unlicensed' performers, or about 'street trading', or whichever other categories the council used to get the above figures.

Response

This request is being handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

I can confirm that Westminster City Council holds the information you requested. However, we are withholding that information since we consider that the following exceptions apply.

The information is exempt from disclosure under the exception in Regulation 12(4)(b) of the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). The request has been assessed as being "manifestly unreasonable". To help us reach this decision we have completed an assessment of the time it would take to comply with your request.

The Council do not have reporting function that can easily extract the information you have requested. Between April 2021 and May 2023 the Council received 2418 busking complaints. The Council do not manage our data from busking complaints in a way that the description of the complaint can be easily extracted.

The Council estimate it will take an officer approximately 10 minutes to review each record and extract the information you have requested.

Further, the public interest in not tying up council resources in complying with the request outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

This response therefore acts as a refusal notice under regulation 14 of the Environmental Information Regulations.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Information Management Team
64 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QP
foi@westminster.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Further information is also available from the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 54 57 45
Fax: 01625 524510
Web: www.ico.org.uk

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely

Westminster City Council